

## **SUMMARY STATEMENT**

### **SUDDEN OAK DEATH (SOD) EMERGENCY REGULATIONS**

Sudden Oak Death (SOD) is a disease caused by the pathogen *Phytophthora ramorum* that was not known to occur in the US prior to 1995. The disease was found in central coastal California. Additional infested areas have been found in Northern California and in a nursery in British Columbia. The infested areas were placed under regulations to prevent the spread of the disease.

Recent confirmation of an infestation in a large nursery operation in southern California, outside the regulated areas, that is known to have shipped stock to a large number of states has caused a high level of concern. The environmental conditions in this new infestation area were thought to be non-conducive to disease survival but this is proving to be incorrect.

Given the grave danger to native oak forests and nursery operations in Arkansas and the potential for wide area dispersal of the disease in an unregulated situation, it is necessary to enact the regulations to protect the interests of Arkansas. Since delimiting surveys are currently being carried out in California and not all infected sites are known, shipment of plant material is continuing. In the absence of survey results, the potential for movement of infected material remains at an unacceptable level.

Emergency action is required to effectively stop the ingress into Arkansas of potentially infected material from California nurseries that have not been declared disease free.